



ROVTLLEDGE'S
XXTH CENTURY
TEMPERANCE
ENTERTAINER

Edited by
ERNEST PERTWEE

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Book: Temperance entertainer

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INTRODUCTION

IN the following pages my aim has been to bring together a set of pieces suitable for delivery by those who have the cause of Temperance actively at heart.

It has always seemed to me that not a few of the so-called "Temperance Readers," "Reciters," and the rest, err in the inclusion of matter crude in production and lacking in taste. This has probably been accentuated by the fact, that our own Poets of the first rank, have in their works, left the subject severely alone—always excepting the late Lord Tennyson, whose *Northern Cobbler* is perhaps the finest temperance poem in the language, and which copyright alone prevents my reprinting here.

But I soon found that such great Writers and Teachers as Whittier, Lowell, Buchanan, MacDonald, Spurgeon, Cardinal Manning and many others had contributed much, that was both excellent and applicable; until at last my difficulty lay in deciding what to omit rather than what to include.

With these few words I leave the book to the judgment and use of the many earnest men and women, who from time to time, are called upon for readings or recitations, bearing upon a subject, the recognition of which is, and must always be, of such vital importance to the community at large.

ERNEST PERTWEE.

THE TWO GLASSES

BY ELLA WHEELER

THERE stood two glasses, filled to the brim,
On a rich man's table, rim to rim ;
One was ruddy and red as blood,
And one was clear as crystal flood.
Said the glass of wine to his paler brother,
" Let us tell tales of the past to each other ;
I can tell of banquet, and revel, and mirth,
Where I was king, for I ruled in might,
And the proudest and grandest souls on earth
Fell under my touch, as though struck with blight.
From the heads of kings I have torn the crown,
From the heights of fame I have hurled men down !
I have blasted many an honoured name,
I have taken virtue and given shame ;
I have tempted the youth with a sip, a taste,
That has made his fortune a barren waste.
Far greater than any king am I,
Or than any army beneath the sky.
I have made the arm of the driver fail,
And sent the train from its iron rail ;

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I have made good ships go down at sea,
And the shrieks of the lost were sweet to me ;
For they said, 'Behold how great you be !
Fame, strength, wealth, genius, before you fall,
And your might and power are over all.'
Ho ! ho ! pale brother," laughed the wine,
"Can you boast of deeds so great as mine ?"

Said the water glass, "I cannot boast
Of a king dethroned or a murdered host ;
But I can tell of hearts that were sad,
By my crystal drops made light and glad ;
Of thirsts I have quenched, and brows I've laved,
Of hands I have cooled, and lives I've saved.
I have leaped through the valley, dashed down the
mountain,
Slept in the sunshine, and dripped from the fountain ;
I have burst my cloud fetters, and dropped from the
sky,
And everywhere gladdened the landscape and eye,
I have eased the hot forehead of fever and pain,
I have made the parched meadows grow fertile with
grain ;
I can tell of the powerful wheel of the mill,
That ground out the flour, and turned at my will.
I can tell of manhood debased by you,
That I have uplifted, and crowned anew ;
I cheer, I help, I strengthen, and aid,
And gladden the heart of man and maid ;
I set the chained wine-captive free,
And all are better for knowing me."

Those are the tales they told each other,
The glass of wine, and its paler brother,
As they stood together, filled to the brim,
On the rich man's table, rim to rim.

HOW JAMIE CAME HOME

BY WILL CARLETON

“COME, mother, set the kettle on,
And put the ham and eggs to fry—
Something to eat, and make it neat,
To please our Jamie’s mouth and eye ;
For Jamie is our only son, you know—
The rest have perished long ago !
He’s coming from the wars to-night,
And his blue eyes will sparkle bright,
And his old smile will play right free,
His old loved home again to see.

“I say, for ’twas a cur’us thing
That Jamie was not maimed or killed !
Five were the years, with hopes and fears,
And gloomy, hapless tidings filled ;
And many a night the past five years
We’ve lain within our cottage here,
And while the rain-storm came and went,
We’ve thought of Jamie in his tent,
And offered many a silent prayer
That God would keep him in His care.

“ And he shall tell us of his fights,
His marches, skirmishes, and all :
Many a tale will make us pale,
And pity those who had to fall ;
And many a tale of sportive style
Will go, perhaps, to make us smile.
And when his stories all are done,
And when the evenings well are gone,
We'll kneel around the hearth once more,
And thank the Lord the war is o'er.

“ Hark ! there's a sound ! He's coming now !
Hark, mother ! there's the sound once more.
Now on our feet, with smiles to greet,
We'll meet him at the opening door.
It is a heavy tread and tone—
Too heavy far for one alone ;
Perhaps the company extends
To some of his old army friends ;
And who they be, and whence they came,
Of course we'll welcome them the same.

“ What bear ye on your shoulders, men ?
Is it my Jamie, stark and dead ?
What did you say ? Once more I pray—
I did not gather what you said.
What ! drunk ? You tell that lie to me ?
What ! drunk ? O God ! it cannot be—
It cannot be my Jamie dear
Lying in drunken slumber here !
It is, as you have said !
Men, lay him on yon waiting bed.

“O mother! take the kettle off,
And set the ham and eggs away.
What was my crime, and when the time,
That I should live to see this day?
For all the sighs I ever drew,
And all the grief I ever knew,
And all the tears I ever shed
Above our children that are dead,
And all the cares that creased my brow
Were nought to what comes o'er me now.

“I would to God that when the three
We lost were hidden from our view,
Jamie had died and by their side
Had lain, all pure and spotless, too!
I would this rain might fall above
The grave of him we joyed to love,
Rather than hear its coming traced
Upon this roof he has disgraced!
But, mother, Addie, come this way,
And let us kneel and humbly pray.”

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MY PLEDGE

BY CARDINAL MANNING

I PROMISE Thee, sweet Lord,
That I will never cloud the light
Which shines from Thee within my soul,
And makes my reason bright ;
Nor ever will I lose the power
To serve Thee by my will,
Which Thou hast set within my heart,
Thy precepts to fulfil.

Oh, let me drink as Adam drank,
Before from Thee he fell ;
Oh, let me drink as Thou, dear Lord,
When faint by Sychar's well ;
That from my childhood, pure from sin,
Of drink and drunken strife,
By the clear fountains, I may rest,
Of everlasting life.

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A SONG OF LABOUR

BY FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE

No lack of work, O friend,
No lack of work in the land ;
Till the dews of night descend,
Not one need stay his hand.
There's never a man too great,
There's never a man too small—
For each in his state, early and late,
There's a worthy task for all.
There's work for every one of us,
For every mother's son of us,
And labour is the crown of life,
Its meaning and its zest.
We'll have no paltry shirking, lads,
But right true manful working, lads.
The honest toil of sturdy hands
That frankly give their best.
Humble the task may be,
Not anywise great or grand,
But that is the task for thee,
Marked out by the Master's hand.
Then do thy work with a will
Wherever thou findest it lie,

Steady and still, with care and skill,
As under the Master's eye.
There's work for every one of us,
For every mother's son of us,
And labour is the crown of life,
Its meaning and its zest.
We'll have no paltry shirking, lads,
But right true manful working, lads.
The honest toil of sturdy hands
That frankly give their best.

Pure is the pride and true
That dares to the world out-tell,
He gave me that work to do,
And I strove to do it well ;
Stoutly I bear my part,
Giving a true man's best,
And I soothe my heart in ache and smart
With thoughts of the evening rest.
There's work for every one of us,
For every mother's son of us,
And labour is the crown of life,
Its meaning and its zest.
We'll have no paltry shirking, lads,
But right true manful working, lads,
The honest toil of sturdy hands
That frankly give their best.

(By Special Permission of the Author.)

NELL

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN

SEE, Nan! his little face looks pinch'd with fright,
His little hands are clench'd together tight!
Born dead, that's comfort! quiet too; when one
Thinks of what kill'd him! Kiss him, Nan, for me.
Thank God, he never look'd upon the sun
That saw his father hang'd on gallows-tree.
O boy, my boy! you're better dead and sleeping,
Kill'd by poor mother's fear, and shame, and weeping:
She never loved another living man,
But held to father all thro' right and wrong—
Ah, yes! I never turn'd against him, Nan,
I stuck by him that stuck by me so long!
You're a kind woman, Nan! ay, kind and true!
God will be good to faithful folk like you!
You knew my Ned?
A better, kinder lad never drew breath—
We loved each other true, though never wed
In church, like some who took him to his death:
A lad as gentle as a lamb, but lost
His senses when he took a drop too much—

Drink did it all—drink made him mad when cross'd—
 He was a poor man, and they're hard on such.
 O Nan! that night! that night!
 When I was sitting in this very chair,
 Watching and waiting in the candle-light,
 And heard his foot come creaking up the stair,
 And turn'd, and saw him standing *yonder*, white
 And wild, with staring eyes and rump'd hair!
 And when I caught his arm and call'd, in fright,
 He push'd me, swore, and to the door he pass'd
 To lock and bar it fast!
 Then down he drops just like a lump of lead,
 Holding his brow, shaking, and growing whiter,
 And—Nan!—just then the light seem'd growing
 brighter,
 And I could see the hands that held his head,
 All red! all bloody red!
 What could I do but scream? He groan'd to hear,
 Jump'd to his feet, and gripp'd me by the wrist;
 "Be still, or I shall kill thee, Nell!" he hiss'd.
 And I *was* still, for fear.
 "They're after me—I've knifed a man!" he said.
 "Be still!—the drink—drink did it—he is *dead!*"
 And as he said the word, the wind went by
 With a whistle and cry—
 The room swam round—the babe unborn seem'd to
 scream out, and die!
 Then we grew still, dead still. I couldn't weep—
 All I could do was cling to Ned and hark—
 And Ned was cold, cold, cold, as if asleep,
 But breathing hard and deep.

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The candle flicker'd out—the room grew dark—
And—Nan!—although my heart was true and tried,
When all grew cold and dim,
I shudder'd—not for fear of them outside,
But just afraid to be alone with *him*.
For winds were wailing—the wild rain cried,—
Folk's footsteps sounded down the court and died—
What could I do but clasp his knees and cling?
And call his name beneath my breath in pain?
Until he threw his head up, listening,
And gave a groan, and hid his face again;
“Ned! Ned!” I whispered—and he moan'd and shook—
But did not heed or look!
“Ned! Ned! speak, lad! tell me it is not true!”
At that he raised his head and look'd so wild;
Then, with a stare that froze my blood, he threw
His arms around me, crying like a child,
And held me close—and not a word was spoken—
While I clung tighter to his heart and press'd him—
And did not fear him, though my heart was broken—
But kiss'd his poor stain'd hands, and cried, and
bless'd him!

Then, Nan, the dreadful daylight, coming cold
With sound o' falling rain,—
When I could *see* his face, and it look'd old,
Like the pinch'd face of one that dies in pain;
Well, though we heard folk stirring in the sun,
We never thought to hide away or run,
Until we heard those voices in the street,
That hurrying of feet.
And Ned leap'd up, and knew that they had come.

“Run, Ned!” I cried, but he was deaf and dumb!
 “Hide, Ned!” I scream’d, and held him—“hide thee,
 man!”

He stared with bloodshot eyes, and hearken’d, Nan!
 And all the rest is like a dream—the sound
 Of knocking at the door—

A rush of men—a struggle on the ground—
 A mist—a tramp—a roar;

For when I got my senses back again,
 The room was empty—and my head went round!
 The neighbours talk’d and stirr’d about the lane,
 And Seven Dials made a moaning sound;
 And as I listen’d, lass, it seem’d to me
 Just like the murmur of the great dark Sea,
 And Ned a-lying somewhere, stiff and drown’d!

God help him? God *will* help him! Ay, no fear!
 It was the drink, not Ned—he meant no wrong;
 So kind! so good!—and I am useless here,
 Now he is lost that loved me true and long.

Why, just before the last of it, we parted,
 And Ned was calm, though I was broken-hearted;
 And ah, my heart *was* broke! and ah, I cried
 And kiss’d him,—till they took me from his side;
 And though he died *that way*, (God bless him!) Ned
 Went through it bravely, calm as any there:

They’ve wrought their fill of spite upon his head,
 And—there’s the hat and clothes he used to wear!

. . . That night before he died,
 I didn’t cry—my heart was hard and dried;
 But when the clocks went “one,” I took my shawl
 To cover up my face, and stole away,

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And walk'd along the silent streets, where all
Look'd cold and still and gray,—
Only the lamps o' London here and there
Scatter'd a dismal gleaming ;
And on I went, and stood in Leicester Square,
Ay, like a woman dreaming :
But just as " three " was sounded close at hand,
I started and turn'd east, before I knew,—
Then down Saint Martin's Lane, along the Strand,
And through the toll-gate, on to Waterloo.
How I remember all I saw, although
'Twas only like a dream !—
The long still lines o' lights, the chilly gleam
Of moonshine on the deep black stream below ;
While far, far, far away, along the sky
Streaks soft as silver ran,
And the pale Moon look'd paler up on high,
And little sounds in far-off streets began !

Well, while I stood, and waited, and look'd down,
And thought how sweet 'twould be to drop and drown,
Some men and lads went by,
And turning round, I gazed, and watch'd 'em go,
Then felt that they were going to see him die,
And drew my shawl more tight, and follow'd slow,
How clear I feel it still !
The streets grew light, but rain began to fall ;
I stopp'd and had some coffee at a stall,
Because I felt so chill ;
A cock crew somewhere, and it seem'd a call
To wake the folk who kill !
The man who sold the coffee stared at me !

I must have been a sorry sight to see!
 More people pass'd—a country cart with hay
 Stopp'd close beside the stall,—and two or three
 Talk'd about *it*! I moan'd, and crept away!
 Ay, nearer, nearer to the dreadful place,
 All in the falling rain,
 I went, and kept my shawl upon my face,
 And felt no grief or pain—
 Only the wet that soak'd me through and through
 Seem'd cold and sweet and pleasant to the touch—
 It made the streets more drear and silent, too,
 And kept away the light I fear'd so much.
 Slow, slow the wet streets fill'd, and all seem'd going,
 Laughing and chatting, the same way,
 And grayer, sadder, lighter, it was growing,
 Though still the rain fell fast and darken'd day!
 Nan!—every pulse was burning—I could feel
 My heart was made o' steel—
 As crossing Ludgate Hill, I saw, all blurr'd,
 Saint Paul's great clock and heard it slowly chime,
 And hadn't power to count the strokes I heard,
 But strain'd my eyes and *saw* it wasn't time.
 Ah! then I felt I dared not creep more near,
 But went into a lane off Ludgate Hill,
 And sitting on a doorstep, I could hear
 The people gathering still!
 And still the rain was falling, falling,
 And deadening the hum I heard from *there*;
 And wet and stiff, I heard the people calling,
 And watch'd the rain-drops glistening down my hair,
 My elbows on my knees, my fingers dead,—

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My shawl thrown off, now none could see,—my head
Dripping and wild and bare.
I heard the crying of a crowd of men,
And next, a hollow sound I knew full well,
For something gripp'd me round the heart!—and then
There came the solemn tolling of a bell!
O God! O God! how could I sit close by,
And neither scream nor cry?
As if I had been stone, all hard and cold,
I listen'd, listen'd, listen'd, still and dumb,
While the folk murmur'd, and the death-bell toll'd,
And the day brighten'd, and his time had come. . . .
. . . Till—Nan!—all else was silent, but the knell
Of the slow bell!
And I could only wait, and wait, and wait,
And what I waited for I couldn't tell,—
At last there came a groaning deep and great—
Saint Paul's struck "eight"—
I scream'd, and seem'd to turn to fire, and fell!
God bless him, live or dead!
Oh, he was kind and true—
They've wrought their fill of spite upon his head—
Why didn't they be kind, and take *me* too?
And there's the dear old things he used to wear,
And here's a lock o' hair!
And Ned! my Ned!
Is fast asleep, and cannot hear me call;—
God bless you, Nan, for all you've done and said,
But don't mind *me*! My heart is broke, that's all!

[From "Poetical Works" (Chatto and Windus, London),
by Special Permission of Miss Harriet Jay.]

ABU MIDJAN

BY GEORGE MACDONALD

“ If I sit in the Dust,
For lauding good wine,
Ha, ha ! it is just,
For so sits the vine.”

Abu Midjan sang, as he sat in chains,
For the blood of the red grape ran in his veins,
The Prophet had said, “ O faithful, drink not,”—
Abu Midjan drank till his heart was hot ;
Yea, he sang a song in praise of wine ;
He called it good names—a joy divine,
The giver of might, the opener of eyes,
Love’s handmaid, the water of Paradise ;
Therefore Saad his chief spake words of blame,
And set him in irons—a fettered flame.
But he sang of the wine as he sat in chains,
For the blood of the grape ran fast in his veins.

“ I will not think
That the prophet said,
*Ye shall not drink
Of the flowing Red.*

192

T.E.

" 'Tis the drenched brain
With an after-sting,
That cries, *Refrain,*
'Tis an evil thing.

" But I will dare
With a goodly drought,
To drink, nor spare,
Till my thirst be out.

" For *I* do not laugh
Like a Christian fool ;
In silence *I* quaff
In liquor cool—

" At the door of my tent,
'Neath the evening star ;
For, when daylight is spent,
And Uriel afar,

" I see, through the sky,
The emerald hills ;
And my faith swells high,
And my bosom thrills.

" For I see them hearken—
The Houris that wait ;
Their dark eyes darken
The diamond gate ;

" I hear the float
Of their chant divine ;
And my heart like a boat
Sails thither on wine.

“ Can an evil thing
Make beauty more ?
Or a sinner bring
To the heavenly door ?

“ ’Tis the sun-rain fine
Would sink and escape,
But is caught by the vine,
And stored in the grape ;

“ And the liquor light
I drink again ;
It flows in might
Through my shining brain ;

“ I love and I know,
And the truth is mine ;
For mine eyes outthrow
The light of the wine.

“ I will not think
That the Prophet said,
*Ye shall not drink
Of the flowing Red ;*

“ For his promises, lo !
They sevenfold shine,
When the channels o’erflow
With the singing wine.

“ But I care, not I !—’tis a small annoy
To sit in chains for a heavenly joy ! ”

Away went the song on the light wind borne ;
His head sunk down, and a ripple of scorn

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Shook the hair that flowed from his curling lip,
As he eyed his brown limbs in the iron's grip.—
But sudden his forehead he lifted high,
For a faint sound strayed like a moth-wing by ;
And like beacons his eyes burst blazing forth,
For a dust he spied in the distant north :—
A noise and a smoke on the plain afar ?—
'Tis the cloud and the clang of the Moslem war !
He sprung aloft like a tiger snared ;
The wine in his veins through his visage flared ;
He tore at his fetters in bootless ire ;
He called the Prophet ; he named his sire ;
From his lips wild-shouted, the Tecbir burst ;
He leaped in his irons ; the Giaours he cursed ;
And his eyes, where the wrath-fires quivered and run,
Were like wine in the crystal 'twixt eye and sun.

The lady of Saad heard the shout,
And his fetters ring on the stones about ;
The heart of a warrior she understood,
And the rage of the thwarted battle-mood ;
Her name, with the cry of an angry prayer,
He called but once, and the lady was there !

“ The Giaour ! ” he panted ; “ the godless brute !
And I like a camel tied foot to foot !
Let me go, and I swear, by Allah's fear,
At sundown I sit in this scoundrel gear,
Or lie in a heaven of starry eyes,
Kissed by moon-maidens of Paradise.
O lady ! grant me the death of the just !
Hark to the hurtle ! see to the dust ! ”

With gentle fingers and eyes of flame,
 The lady unlocked the iron blame ;
 Brought her husband's horse, his Abdon, out,
 And his linked armour, light and stout,
 Harnessed the warrior, and hight him go
 An angel of vengeance upon the foe.

With clank of steel and thud of hoof,
 Away he galloped ; she climbed the roof.

Out of the dust-cloud flashes leap,
 For the sickle-shaped sabres inside it reap,
 With stroke reversed, the human swath—
 And thither he gallops, the reaper of wrath !
 Straight as an arrow she sees him go,
 Abu Midjan, the singer, upon the foe ;
 Like a bird he vanishes in the cloud,
 But the thunder of battle bursts more loud,
 Mingled of crashes and blows and falls,
 Of the whish that severs the throat that calls,
 Of neighing and shouting and groaning grim :—
 Abu Midjan, she sees no more of him ;
 Northward the battle drifts afar,
 On the flowing tide of the holy war.

Lonely across the desert sand,—
 From his wrist, by the thong, hung his dripping brand—
 Red in the sunset's level flame,
 Back to his bonds Abu Midjan came.

“ O lady, I vow, 'tis a mighty horse !
 The Prophet himself might have rode a worse.
 I rejoiced in the play of his knotting flesh,
 As he tore to the quarry in Allah's mesh ;

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I forgot him, and swept at the traitor weeds—
They fell before me like rushes and reeds,
Or as the tall poppies a boy would mow
Drop their heads to his unstrung bow :—
Fled the Giaour ; the faithful flew after a kill,
I turned—and Abdon was under me still !
Give him water, lady, and barley to eat ;
Then haste thee and chain the wine-bibber's feet.”

To the terrace he went, and she to the stall ;
She tended the horse like a guest in hall—
Slow-footed then to the warrior returned.
The fire of the fight in his eyes yet burned,
But he sat in silence, and seemed ashamed,
As if words of boast from his lips had flamed.
She spoke not, but left him seated—bound,
Silent and motionless—on the ground.

But what singer could ever sit lonely long,
And the hidden fountain not burst in song ?
Abu Midjan sang as he sat in chains,
For the wine of the battle foamed wild through his veins.

rand—
“ Oh, the wine
Of the vine
Is a feeble thing !
In the rattle
Of battle
The true grapes spring,

“ When on whirl
O' th' Tecbir
Allah's wrath flies ;

And the Giaour
Like a flower
Down-trodden lies ;
“ When, on force
Of the horse,
The arm, flung abroad,
Is sweeping
And reaping
The harvest of God.
“ They drop
From the top
To the sear heap below ;
Ha ! deeper,
Down steeper,
The infidels go !
“ Azrael
Sheer to hell
Shoots the foul shoals ;
And Monker
And Nakir
Torture their souls.
“ But when drop
On their crop
The scimitars red,
And under
Wars’ thunder
The faithful lie dead,
“ Oh ! bright
Is the light
On the hero slow breaking !

Rapturous faces,
Bent for embraces,
Wait on his waking.

“ And he hears
In his ears
The voice of the river,
Like a maiden
Love laden,
Go wandering ever.

“ Oh! the wine
Of the vine
May lead to the gates;
But the rattle
Of battle
Wakes the angel who waits!

“ To the Lord
Of the sword
Open it must;
The drinker
The thinker
Sits in the dust.

“ He dreams
Of the gleams
Of the garments of white:
He misses
Their kisses—
The maidens of light.

“ They long
 For the strong
 Who has burst through alarms—
 Up, by the labour
 Of stirrup and sabre—
 Up to their arms.

“ Oh ! the wine of the grape is a feeble ghost ;
 But the wine of the fight is the joy of a host ! ”

When Saad came home from the far pursuit,
 An hour he sat, and an hour was mute,
 Then he opened his mouth : “ Ah ! wife, the fight
 Had been lost full sure, but an arm of might
 Sudden rose up on the crest of the war,
 Flashed from his sabre blue lightnings afar,
 Took up the battle and drove it on,—
 Enoch sure, or the good St. John !
 Wherever he leaped, like a lion he,
 The fight was thickest, or soon to be ;
 Wherever he sprang, with his lion cry,
 The thick of the battle soon went by.
 With a headlong fear, the sinners fled ;
 We drove them down the steep of the dead ;
 Before us, not from us, did they flee—
 They ceased—in the depths of a crimson sea !
 But him who had saved us, we saw no more ;
 He had gone, as he came, by a secret door.
 And strangest of all—nor think I err
 If a miracle I for truth aver—
 I was close to him thrice—the holy Force
 Wore my silver-ringed hauberk, rode Abdon my horse ! ”

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The lady arose nor answered a word,
But led to the terrace her wondering lord.
There, song-soothed, and weary with battle strain,
Abu Midjan sat counting the links of his chain.

“The battle was raging—he raging worst :
I freed him,—harnessed him,—gave him thy horse.”

“Abu Midjan! the singer of love and of wine!
The arm of the battle—it also was thine!
Rise up, shake the irons from off thy feet,
For the lord of the fight are fetters meet?
If thou wilt, then drink till thou be hoar—
And Allah shall judge thee—I judge no more.”

Abu Midjan arose. He flung aside
The clanking fetters, and thus he cried :
“If thou give me to God and His decrees,
Nor purge my sin by the shame of these—
Wrath against me I dare not store :
In the name of Allah, I drink no more !”

*(By Special Permission of the Author, and of Messrs.
Chatto and Windus.)*